

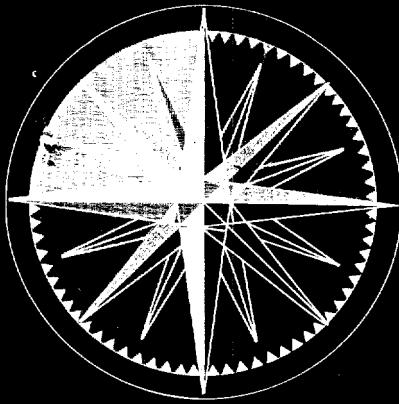
SECRET

release 2006/10/11 : CIA-RDP79-00927A005500010002-1

14 October 1966

OCI No. 0311/66A

Copy No. 42



CURRENT INTELLIGENCE WEEKLY SPECIAL REPORT

JAMAICA FOUR YEARS AFTER INDEPENDENCE

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

NO FOREIGN DISSEM

SECRET

GROUP 1 Excluded from automatic
downgrading and declassification

This Special Report is a supplement to the current intelligence weekly issued on this date by the Office of Current Intelligence. Special Reports are published separately in order to give the subject more comprehensive treatment than is possible in that publication. Special Reports are produced by the Office of Current Intelligence, Office of Research and Reports or the Directorate of Science and Technology.

THIS MATERIAL CONTAINS INFORMATION AFFECTING THE NATIONAL DEFENSE OF THE UNITED STATES WITHIN THE MEANING OF THE ESPIONAGE LAWS, TITLE 18, USC, SECTIONS 793 AND 794, THE TRANSMISSION OR REVELATION OF WHICH IN ANY MANNER TO AN UNAUTHORIZED PERSON IS PROHIBITED BY LAW.

DISSEMINATION CONTROLS

This document MUST NOT BE RELEASED TO FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS. If marked with specific dissemination controls in accordance with the provisions of DCID 1/7, the document must be handled within the framework of the limitation so imposed.

This Special Report was produced by CIA. Aside from the normal substantive exchange with other agencies at the working level, this paper has not been coordinated outside CIA. It was prepared by the Office of Current Intelligence and coordinated with the Office of Research and Reports.

SECRET**JAMAICA FOUR YEARS AFTER INDEPENDENCE**

Four years after independence Jamaica gives the appearance of a relatively stable, democratic, and flourishing society. The two-party system is very much alive, with both parties essentially moderate and almost equally matched. Extremist groups exist but thus far have made little headway. The economy has had a notable annual average growth rate of between six and seven percent (in real terms) since the mid-1950s, and per capita income of about \$450 is high for Latin America.

The country's constitutional order and prosperity, however, face some severe tests. Danger spots of discontent and disorder exist and are fed by economic and social distress. The government has been taking steps which over the long run may improve the lot of population groups now suffering hardship. At the same time it is using US help to train and equip its internal security force so that it can deal effectively with the riots which have been becoming more frequent in the Kingston area. The fear is that time may run out and that extremists may find the opportunity they have been waiting for to exploit the depressed elements of the population for their own ends.

Political Change in the Offing

Jamaica's tradition of parliamentary rule has been enhanced by the broad popular support of both the ruling Jamaica Labor Party (JLP) and the opposition Peoples National Party (PNP) based on their respective trade unions. The large rural population is not removed from the political mainstream but finds representation, along with other well-defined interest groups, in the two major parties.

Uneasiness is mounting, however, as the two men credited

with giving the island strong leadership and a stable two-party system near the end of their careers. Their departure will leave some doubt about future leadership and political stability. General elections must take place before August 1967, and all indications are for a close race. The prime minister and leader of the JLP, Sir Alexander Bustamante, now 82 and ailing, is incapable of carrying out his responsibilities but refuses to retire. The government is being effectively led by Acting Prime Minister Donald Sangster, but Bustamante's

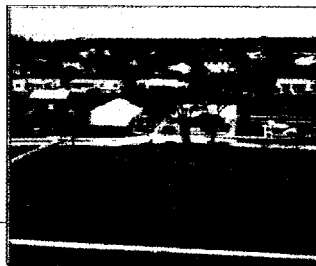
SECRET

Page 1 SPECIAL REPORT 14 Oct 66

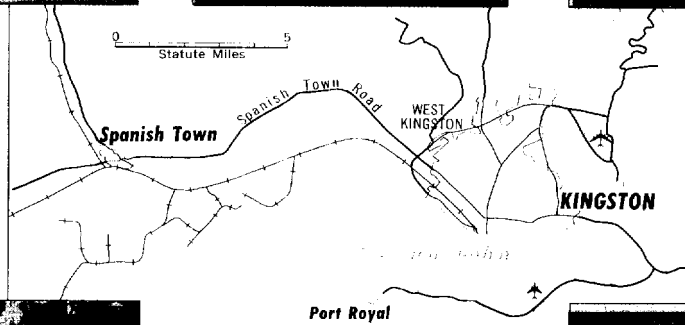
SLUMS ON SPANISH TOWN ROAD
West Kingston



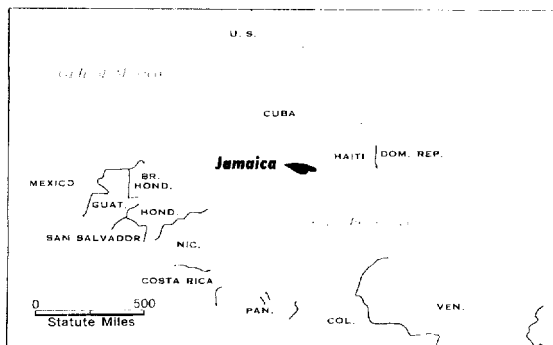
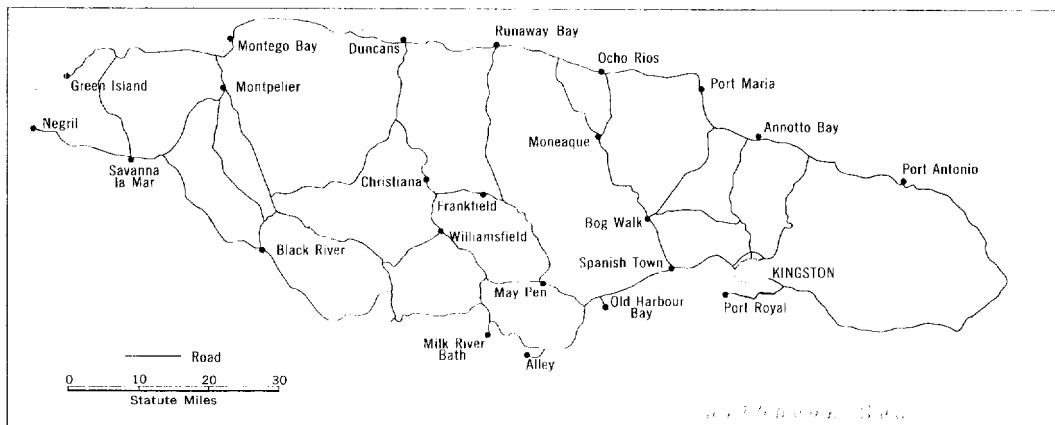
MODERN HOUSING - Kingston



BLACKWALL SLUM DISTRICT
West Kingston



← **RASTAFARIAN BROTHERS** →



DONALD B. SANGSTER
Acting Prime Minister



NORMAN W. MANLEY
Opposition Leader

SECRET

refusal to relinquish much of the decision making has made Sangster's job difficult and uncertain.

It is questionable whether Sangster will succeed to the leadership of party and government if the JLP wins the elections. He does not have broad appeal nor is he the prime minister's favorite, and he would probably inherit the leadership only if Bustamante should die without naming an heir. Among the other possible successors are Minister of Trade and Industry Robert Lightbourne, a brilliant speaker and politician; Minister without Portfolio Hugh Shearer, Bustamante's personal favorite, who supervises the JLP-affiliated trade union and has a reputation as a political lightweight; the quiet and effective Minister of Labor Lyndon Newland; and Minister of Development and Welfare Edward Seaga.

Seaga [redacted] is obviously preparing himself for the JLP leadership, but is believed by many observers to be not yet ready to stake his claim.

[redacted] Harvard-trained Seaga is a political anomaly in Jamaica. He is the most light-skinned of the legislators, but was elected from the black poverty-ridden areas of West Kingston. Describing himself as a liberal, he once formed a leftist bloc within

the JLP ranks, but has since followed a cautious course to stay in good standing with Bustamante. However, Seaga's concentration on the "little man" and youth has brought him a personal following and he is reportedly the most popular JLP leader next to Bustamante himself. [redacted]

[redacted] slums. Now 35, Seaga is clever and articulate and has all the attributes to reach the political pinnacle.

The future PNP leadership is equally clouded. Party leader Norman Manley has indicated he intends to lead the party in the next election. At 73, however, Manley appears to have lost much of his vitality. His son Michael, who leads the labor wing of the party, is a possible successor, although he is opposed by those who want a change from Manley leadership.

In both parties there are elements which appear to favor policies that could change Jamaica's present constitutional pattern. The departure of Bustamante and Manley might create a situation in which extremist elements of either party could eventually seize power.

Economic Progress

Jamaica's history of political stability has provided the basis for the island's economic development. The country now is

SECRET

SECRET

the world's largest exporter of bauxite and alumina, and the expansion of this industry has provided a stimulus for further industrialization and diversification. In recent years, Jamaica has become an exporter of some manufactured products. Tourism is of growing importance as a foreign exchange earner. Thus, unlike many Caribbean countries, Jamaica has been able to diversify its economy somewhat, and is less dependent on agricultural exports for foreign exchange earnings.

The country has had an exceptional economic growth rate--about 7.5 percent in 1965. Economic development in recent years, however, has been unbalanced, with growth in the industrial sector far outpacing that of agriculture. In 1965, most sectors of the economy showed a significant increase in output but depressed prices for sugar and bananas, the main agricultural exports, resulted in a slight over-all decline in export earnings. Tourism set the pace for the rest of the economy with an estimated 50 percent more in foreign exchange earnings than in 1964. Record levels of production were achieved in mining and manufacturing, and construction continued to make gains.

In the short run, the recent pattern of steady economic growth is likely to continue. Investor confidence is high, and most business people are optimistic about a prosperous future.

Economic and Social Problems

Despite this generally favorable economic picture, some serious economic and social dislo-

cations exist. Among the most pressing are a population growth rate of over 3 percent per year, chronic widespread unemployment (some 16 percent), and an uneven distribution of wealth. More than half of Jamaica's 1.8 million people are under 21, and 40 percent are 14 or under. About half of the estimated 18,000 youngsters who enter the labor market annually cannot find jobs. The result has been a rise in social unrest marked by strikes and by outbreaks of violence in the more depressed urban areas.

A third of the population is concentrated in Kingston, where the largest numbers of unemployed and unemployable youths reside. These elements mainly inhabit the slums of West Kingston and live in appalling conditions. This part of the city, a breeding ground for vice, crime, and political unrest, is the scene of frequent riots caused both by political gangs and by young hoodlum elements. Open violence, featuring guns, machetes, and dynamite bombs, has become a popular habit in West Kingston. The escalating warfare caused the government to declare a state of emergency in the area on 3 October. Police and military were brought in to conduct search and seizure operations and, although the effects have been salutary, the situation remains potentially explosive.

Other problems, partially hidden, include class friction, racial antagonism, and a general discontent of farmers with their lot. Over 91 percent of the population is of African or Afro-European descent so that Jamaica is

SECRET

SECRET

not faced with the racial problems that exist in some Caribbean countries. However, extreme poverty is generally to be found among the Africans, while the Afro-Europeans and the small number of Afro-Asians are comparatively affluent. Racial differences thus can become an aggravating factor in social disorders arising from economic distress.

Corrective Measures

The government is undertaking programs to improve these economic and social trouble spots, but whether its efforts will suffice to head off serious trouble remains in doubt. It has instituted a "family planning" program, but an effect on the population boom and the labor force will not be felt for some years. It has also started acquiring land for distribution to farmers and has launched a guaranty program to encourage private banks to provide agricultural credit. It is giving higher priority to development of human resources, which includes the expansion of teacher and vocational training and educational television. With the help of UNESCO, AID, and IBRD, it has developed a plan for an expanded program in education. The US AID program is also assisting in the fields of agriculture, health, housing, and population control.

Following last spring's strikes and riots, Acting Prime Minister Sangster expressed deep concern to the US ambassador over what he termed the "explosive" situation resulting from a deterioration of internal security. Sangster requested the speedy dispatch of a public safety mission,

assistance in public works projects, and a program to increase police surveillance capabilities. A US public safety mission was sent in May and prepared an analysis of police needs and problems. As a result, the Jamaican Government has accepted a US package proposal to provide training and equipment to the Jamaican Constabulary for a two-year period. The constabulary, although the oldest in the British Empire, is ill equipped and poorly organized. Its force, which numbers 2,500, would be hard pressed to contain large-scale rioting and violence, particularly if the unrest spreads to other depressed urban areas.

Subversive Influences

There is no evidence of outside subversive influence in the recent outbreaks of violence. Rather, they appear to stem from rising political tensions over the coming elections and depressed social conditions. There is no official Communist party, and there are probably no more than 40 hard-core Communists in Jamaica. There are, however, some extreme left-wing groups which are not registered as political parties, such as the Socialist Party of Jamaica (SPJ), the Unemployed Workers' Council (UWC), and the Young Socialist League (YSL).

The YSL, the most effective of the extremist groups, has an estimated following of 700 to 1,000. Although most members could not be considered Communists, they are sympathizers with extreme leftist causes and responsive to the direction of extremists. The

SECRET

SECRET

proclaimed policy of the group is vigorous socialism, and its leaders have established some degree of influence within the People's National Party. Recently, several YSL members, protesting the organization's lack of militancy, formed an extremist group called the Young Communist Organization (YCO). The new group has plans to enlist the support of young hooligans to carry out sabotage and terrorism but to date has not been able to attract them.

Some of these front groups have attempted to exploit the Rastafarian Back-to-Africa sect, but with little or no success. Adherents of the sect range from those peaceably seeking a return to Africa at the one extreme, to ne'er-do-wells at the other. The latter elements are potential subjects for exploitation.

Recent information indicates that unity of various left-wing

groups may have been achieved with the quiet absorption of the 500-member UWC by the YSL. Members of the various left-wing groups have been in touch with the Cuban consul in Kingston, known to be an intelligence officer, who has tried to exploit these contacts for subversive purposes and promote left-wing unity.

While Communist influence has been small compared with many Latin American and Caribbean countries, prevailing conditions offer fertile ground for subversion. If Bustamante and Manley should give way to less responsible and able leaders, and particularly if depressed social conditions continue for many of the islanders, Jamaica could become a prime target for Communist exploitation. (SECRET NO FOREIGN DISSEM)

* * *

SECRET

Page 6 SPECIAL REPORT 14 Oct 66

SECRET

SECRET